

**[Re-printed for the use of Magistrates, Clergymen, Local Boards of Health, Members of the Medical Profession, and a few private friends in Nova-Scotia. &c]**

(FOR NOTE, SEE PAGE No. 4.)

Central Board of Health,  
Council Office, Whitehall, 13th Dec. 1831.

SIR,

**A**GREEABLY to the Intimation given by this Board in the concluding Paragraph of their Circular, dated 14th Ult., I have the Honor to transmit the subjoined "Sanitary Instructions for Communities supposed to be actually attacked by Spasmodic Cholera," with some Observations on the Nature and Treatment of the Disease, drawn up by Drs. Russell and Barry.

Every Individual being deeply interested in the Preservation of the Public Health, it is the bounden Duty of all to endeavour to arrest the Spread of Disease at its very Commencement. In order to attain this important object—

1st. The most efficient Arrangements should be made by the Local Boards of Health, and other Authorities, to obtain the earliest and most correct intelligence of every suspicious Case which may occur within their Jurisdiction.

2nd. All unnecessary Communication should be prevented, as far as possible, between the infected and the healthy.

3rd. As Space, Cleanliness, and pure Air, are of the most vital Consequence, both to the recovery of the sick Person and to the Safety of those about him, the Patient labouring under Spasmodic Cholera should either be placed in a separate, well-ventilated Apartment of his own House, if it affords such Accommodation, and be attended by as few Persons as the Circumstances of his Case will admit, or be induced to submit to an immediate Removal to such Building as may have been provided for the Reception of Persons whose Circumstances will not afford the Advantages at Home, of Space, Air, and Separation from the healthy.

4th. When an individual shall have been attacked with this Disease, and placed under the most favorable Conditions, as already pointed out, both for the Recovery of his own, and the safety of the Public Health;—the Room or Apartment where he may have been attacked, and from which he may have been removed, should be purified by scrubbing, lime-washing, free Ventilation and Fumigation by heated Sulphuric Acid and Common Salt, with Black Oxyde of Manganese, or the same Acid with Nitre; or, when these Materials cannot be obtained, by strong vinegar thrown upon heated Bricks. The Bed, Bedding, and Clothes, should be immersed in Water, washed with Soap, and afterwards fumigated as above.

5th. To correct all offensive Smells, Chloride of Lime may be applied; but great Caution is recommended in the Use of this Material, its Fumes, continued for any Length of Time, having been found highly prejudicial to Health, more particularly in delicate Persons.

6th. A Number of steady Men, proportionate to the District in which they are to act, should be appointed to lime-wash and purify, as ordered above, under the Direction of Medical Authority, such Apartments as may be pointed out by the Inspectors of the Local Board.

7th. Those who die of this Disease should be buried as soon as possible wrapped in Cotton or Linen Cloth saturated with Pitch, or Coal Tar, and be

To the Chairman of the Board of Health at

carried to the Grave by the fewest possible Number of Persons. The Funeral Service to be performed in the open Air.

8th. It is of the utmost Importance to the Public Health that an improved Diet, and Fannel Clothing, at least Flannel Belts and Woollen Stockings, should be given to the Poor. No Person should ever allow himself to sit down and get cool, with wet Feet: Indeed the most particular Attention should be paid to keeping the Feet dry and warm. Repletion and Indigestion should be guarded against; all raw Vegetables, acescent, unwholesome Food and Drink avoided. Temperance should be most rigidly observed in every thing. In short, no Means should be neglected which may tend to preserve individual Health. The Neglect of any or all of these Cautions would not of themselves produce the specific Disease called Spasmodic Cholera; but such Neglect would most assuredly dispose the Individual living in an infected Atmosphere to be attacked by this Disease, when most probable he might otherwise have escaped.

The most effectual Means by which this Disease may be prevented from extending, is to enable the Poor, who are generally the first attacked, to oppose to its Influence, as far as practicable, those Ameliorations in Diet, Clothing, and Lodging, which public and private Charity will, it is hoped, not fail to produce.

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*Observations on the Nature and Treatment of the Disease, drawn up by Drs. Russell and Barry.*

"Of the Two great Classes of Functions performed by the Organs of which Man is composed, One only is attacked in this Disease. The operations of the Senses and of the Intelligence are either left untouched, or are affected but in a secondary Manner.

Those functions, on the contrary, by which Existence as a living Being is preserved; those complicated Powers, by Means of which we are for ever appropriating and converting into a Part of ourselves Portions of the Matter around us; are all and at once deranged by the Attack of this terrible Malady. Nutrition is annihilated; Respiration becomes difficult, irregular, and inefficient; the involuntary Muscles no longer perform their Task; the voluntary are drawn into Contractions by other Powers than the Will; the Blood ceases to circulate; its Physical Properties are altered; its serous Portion is suddenly thrown out upon the intestinal mucous Surface of the Body; the Secretions are all arrested; and animal Heat is no longer produced.

Under such rapidly destructive, and almost universal Derangement of Function, the most energetic Efforts should be directed to reproduce what the Disease has rendered Nature unable to keep up; viz.

- 1st. Fluidity, Heat, and Motion in the Blood.
  - 2nd. Regulated Action in the voluntary, and involuntary Muscles.
- Lastly, but above every other Consideration, renewed Energy in the Nervous Centre, the Source of all Vitality and Function.

No Remedy at all approaching to the Nature of a Specific has been as yet discovered for this Disease. In fact, no One Mode of Cure can be usefully

employed under all the Circumstances of any Disease. The Grades of Intensity, and the grouping of the Symptoms with which Spasmodic Cholera makes its Attacks, vary with the Conditions of the Subject ; its Treatment therefore, must vary with these Grades and Conditions.

The leading preliminary Symptoms generally are, either Diarrhœa, Spasms, Apoplectic Vertigo with Nausea, imperfect vomiting, or various Combinations of these Symptoms.

When the Diarrhœa affords Time for distinct Treatment, it ought to be arrested at once by the most prompt and efficient Measures ;—by Opium in moderate Doses ; Astringents ; local Bleeding by Leeches, if the Subject be plethoric ; by Cordials and Sulphate of Quinine, if there be cold Sweats ; by confining the Patient strictly to Bed, and keeping up Heat ; by Diet ; by Emetics.

Should Spasms be the first and leading Symptom, Subnitrate of Bismuth, Cupping along the Course of the Spine, Cordial, and Antispasmodic Medicines, Opium, Frictions, and dry Warmth are indicated.

But when the Patient is suddenly seized with Vertigo, Nausea, Coldness, Loss of Pulse, Blueness of the Skin, shrinking of the Features and Extremities, with more or less watery Discharges and Cramps ; constituting an aggravated Case of the worst Type ; whether this State shall have come on without Warning, or shall have supervened upon either or both of the preliminary Sets of Symptoms already mentioned, Time must not be wasted upon inert Measures. Such a Patient will inevitably perish, and within a very few Hours, if the paralysed vital Functions be not quickly restored.

Let him then be immediately placed between warm Blankets ; and should no Medical Person be at hand, let Two Table-spoons full of common Kitchen Salt dissolved in 6 oz. of warm Water, be given immediately, and at once, if he be an Adult. Let dry and steady Heat be applied along the Course of the Spine, and to the Pit of the Stomach, (if no other Means be at hand,) by a Succession of heated Plates or Platters. Let the upper and lower Extremities be surrounded with Bags of heated Bran, Corn, Ashes or Sand, and assiduously rubbed with a warm Hand, and a little Oil or Grease to protect the Skin. Energetic, complete vomiting will probably be produced by the Salt ; and perhaps bilious purging, with Tenesmus.

Should a Medical Man be on the Spot, a moderate Bleeding, if it can be obtained, would be desirable, previously to, or immediately after the Administration of the Salt, or of any other Emetic which may be preferred.

The extensively deranged Action of those Organs, whose Nerves are chiefly derived from, or connected with, the Spinal Marrow ; the anatomical Characters found about that great Source of Vitality, after Death, in many Cases of this Disease ; together with the Success stated by Dr. Lange, Chief Physician at Cronstadt, to have attended the Practice mentioned below, founded upon these Views, in Twelve out of Fourteen aggravated Cases, fully justify the following Recommendation.

In Cases such as those just described, let the actual Caustery be freely applied to One or Two, or more Places on either Side of the Spine, as if for the Purpose of forming good-sized Issues. Should the heated Iron have produced

any Excitement of the nervous Power, and the Salt-emetic have caused any Portion of the Bile to flow through its proper Duct, a great Step will have been accomplished towards Recovery from the Stage of Collapse. Cordials and Opiates judiciously administered; Sinapisms and other external Stimulants; Mercurials, with mild Aromatic Aperients, which the Intelligence and Activity of British Medical Practitioners will not fail to adapt to the actual Circumstances of each Case, will conduct the Patient safely to the Stage of Re-action.

The Organs, during the Collapse of this Disease, probably owing to deficient Vitality, often give no Indication of having been acted upon by repeated Doses of certain powerful Medicines, which under other Circumstances would have produced the most pronounced Effects. It is therefore suggested, that this temporary Insensibility of the System should not incite the Administration of such repeated Quantities as could, by Accumulation, when the Organs begin to recover their Vitality, give rise to unfavorable Results.

Thirst being a most distressing Symptom of this Disease, the Quality and the Temperature of the Drink should perhaps be left to the Choice of the Patient; but the Quantity taken at a time should not exceed Four Ounces, and should be acidulated with Nitrous Acid, if the Patient will bear it.

Should the Disease prove extensively, and rapidly epidemic in a large Community, it would be prudent to establish Stations at convenient Distances from each other, where Medical Assistance and Medicines might be procured without the Risk of Disappointment or delay. The Details of these Arrangements are left to the Wisdom of Local Boards of Health.

As the Symptoms of the consecutive Stage of feverish Re-action in Cholera differ but little, if at all, from those of ordinary Typhus, except perhaps in the greater Rapidity with which they but too often run to a fatal Termination; and as this Kind of Fever is treated in no part of the World with more Success than in England, the entire Management of this Stage of the Disease is left to the Zeal and Science of the Profession at large.

Attentive Nursing, and assiduous, well-directed Rubbing, are of the utmost Importance; a strictly horizontal Position, however, must be maintained until the Heart shall have, partly at least, recovered its Action. An erect or even semi-erect position, during the Collapse, has been often observed to produce instant Death. Warm Baths therefore, for this and other Reasons, are worse than useless; evaporating Fluids, and indeed all Moisture applied to the Skin, seem to be contradicted for obvious Reasons. Hot Air Baths, so contrived as to be applicable in a recumbent Posture, and admitting Access to the Patient for the Purpose of Friction, may be of use."

I have the Honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

E. STEWART, Chairman.

\* The Individual who causes this re-print to be made at Halifax, of an important document from the Central Board of Health in London, earnestly requests, that every Person into whose Hands this copy may come, will preserve it, and give its contents every possible circulation.

*Observations & Instructions  
relative to the Management  
of Cholera*

*J. Madden*